Improvement of Governance in PRIs

2879. SHRI RAMAMUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Advisory Council is shifting its attention to finance and administrative empowerment to PRIs in the country;

(b) whether the National Advisory Council has submitted any paper in this regard; and

(c) what effective measures his Ministry is taking to improve governance and efficient delivery system in PRIs?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The National Advisory Council has the subject under consideration in the context of realizing the full potential of Panchayati Raj and the Municipal Bodies, in keeping with the objectives in this regard laid out in the National Common Minimum Programme of the United Progressive Alliance.

(b) No, Sir, no paper in this regard has as yet been provided to this Ministry nor posted in their website.

(c) The following measures have been taken by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to improve governance and efficient delivery systems in Panchayati Raj Institutions:-

- A Conference of Chief Ministers and State Ministers in charge of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj on "Poverty Alleviation and Rural Prosperity through Panchayati Raj" was organized at New Delhi on 29-30 June, 2004, jointly by the Ministry of Rural Development and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. Issues relating to effective implementation of Part IX and IX A of the Constitution on Panchayati Raj were tabled as agenda for discussions by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

- The Conference decided to hold seven Round Tables to formulate a draft action plan towards achieving the objective of strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions so as to enable them to emerge as institutions of self-government for the planning and implementation of programmes of economic development and social justice as envisioned in the Constitution.

- Between July and December, 2004, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj convened seven Round Tables with the State Ministers in charge of Panchayati Raj and evolved by consensus a set of 150 points for action on 18 dimensions of Panchayati Raj which were adopted unanimously at the last Round Table in Jaipur.
- A National presentation on Rural Business Hubs "Economic Empowerment through Panchayats" was held on 5th November, 2004 at New Delhi in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry, in which elected representatives of Panchayati Raj, Ministers of Panchayati Raj from States and UTs alongwith members of Cll participated.
- A Council of Ministries of Panchayati Raj of States/Union Territories has been constituted under the Chairmanship of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India to monitor the implementation of the 150 recommendations of the Seven Round Tables.
- A Committee of Chief Secretaries of States and State Panchayati Raj Secretaries has been constituted under the Chairmanship of the Secretary (Panchayati Raj) to monitor the progress on the implementation of the 150 recommendations of the Seven Round Tables.
- The Ministry has now initiated a process of visiting each of the States/UTs to review with the authorities concerned the progress in implementing the points for action agreed upon in the Round Tables.
- It is expected that this will accelerate the pace of implementation of the provisions of Part IX read with Article 243ZD of the Constitution cocnerning the District Planning Committees and bring about greater conformity in both letter and spirit, to the Constitutional provisions.
- On the direction of the Prime Ministers' Office, the Cabinet Secretariat has issued instructions to all Central Ministries to review their Centrally-Sponsored Schemes with a view to ensuring that they comply with the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution in letter and spirit. This process is underway.
- Cabinet Secretariat has also instructed the Central Ministries to route all proposals for new Centrally Sponsored Schemes through the Ministry of Panchayati Raj so that the centrality of Panchayats in the implementation of the schemes is ensured. In pursuance thereof, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has examined several proposals.